MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am pleased to be able to say 2008 was another successful year for the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG). The NCRG continued to strive toward fulfilling its three-pronged mission of funding only the highest quality peer-reviewed research into disordered gambling, translating research findings into practical applications for real-world use, and increasing awareness and education about responsible gaming. On all three fronts we have excelled.

For 12 years, funding from the NCRG has given some of the brightest minds in the mental health field the support needed to further our understanding of gambling disorders. NCRG-funded studies published in highly competitive peer-reviewed journals in 2008 are testaments to the incredible progress the field has made over the past decade. As you’ll see in the research section of this annual report, new research is focusing on a wide range of topics — from studies exploring new revelations about the nature of gambling disorders to investigations of the disorder in potentially vulnerable populations to examinations of what impact, if any, new technologies may have on gambling behavior. These new studies are helping us to better understand the disorder, and will likely lead to important advances in prevention and treatment.

The NCRG dedicated a significant amount of energy in 2008 to developing practical applications for research findings and increasing awareness about disordered gambling and responsible gaming. We published “Talking with Children about Gambling,” a research-based guide for parents, teachers and others who mentor youth to help them discuss this important topic with children and teenagers, and help them avoid risky behaviors. The NCRG also produced a new Research & Resources guide that provides a thoughtful yet succinct overview of the field of disordered gambling and responsible gaming, and we continued to present easy-to-understand summaries of research findings in the monograph series.

The NCRG hit the road again this year — including a two-city road tour to Chicago and Des Moines, and participating in 12 events hosted by other organizations — to educate stakeholders about the latest gaming research and the NCRG’s many educational resources. Additionally, in November, the 9th annual NCRG Conference on Gambling and Addiction attracted more than 360 attendees from around the world to Las Vegas to learn about the changing landscape of research, treatment, responsible gaming and public policy.

Serving as the NCRG’s chairman for the past three years has been a remarkable and gratifying experience. I am proud of the progress we have made in that time, some of which is detailed in the pages that follow, and as I step down from the chairmanship, I look forward to continuing to be involved in the NCRG as a board director.

I am also pleased to introduce the NCRG’s new chairman, Glenn Christie. As a long-term NCRG board member, the chairman of the Nevada Governor’s Problem Gambling Advisory Committee and someone who has been deeply involved in responsible gaming issues for many years, I can think of no one better to lead the NCRG’s continued work in this field. I look forward to working with Glenn and with my fellow board directors to ensure the NCRG’s continued fulfillment of its mission.

Sincerely,

Philip G. Satre
2006-2008 Chairman
National Center for Responsible Gaming
NCRG LEADERSHIP

The National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) is the only national organization exclusively devoted to funding peer-reviewed research that helps increase understanding of gambling disorders and advances the development of effective screening, diagnostic, prevention and treatment strategies. Founded in 1996 as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, the NCRG is the American Gaming Association’s affiliated charity.

To date, the NCRG has raised more than $22 million to support scientific research into pathological gambling; encourage the practical application of new research findings; and develop scientifically-based responsible gaming education and outreach programs.

The NCRG is overseen by a board of directors and a board of trustees, with each entity holding unique but complementary roles. The board of directors serves as the practical, hands-on management group for the organization and focuses on education and outreach program creation and implementation, as well as maintaining the NCRG’s relationship with the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders. The board of trustees consists of CEOs of NCRG donor companies and is focused entirely on fundraising activities, both to support new education and outreach efforts and to continue to support peer-reviewed scientific research grants. The following individuals served the NCRG in 2008:

**Officers**
- **CHAIRMAN**
  - Philip G. Satre
  - Former Chairman and CEO
  - Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.
- **PRESIDENT**
  - William S. Boyd
  - Executive Chairman
  - Boyd Gaming Corporation
- **SECRETARY AND TREASURER**
  - Judy L. Patterson
  - Senior Vice President and Executive Director
  - American Gaming Association

**Board of Directors**
- Robert Boswell
  - Senior Vice President
  - Pioneer Behavioral Health
- Glenn Christenson
  - Managing Director
  - Velstand Investments, LLC
- Sue Cox
  - Founding Executive Director
  - Texas Council on Problem and Compulsive Gambling
- Alan Feldman
  - Senior Vice President of Public Affairs
  - MGM MIRAGE
- Kevin P. Mullally
  - General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs
  - Gaming Laboratories International, Inc.
- Jennifer Shatley
  - Vice President of Responsible Gaming Policies and Compliance
  - Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.

**Board of Trustees**
- Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr.
  - President and CEO
  - American Gaming Association
- Frank J. Fertitta III
  - Chairman, President and CEO
  - Station Casinos, Inc.
- Brian R. Gamache
  - Chairman and CEO
  - WMS Gaming Inc.
- Aki Isoi
  - President/CEO
  - JCM Global
- Gordon R. Kanofsky
  - Vice Chairman and CEO
  - Ameristar Casinos, Inc.
- J. Terrence Lanni
  - Chairman and CEO
  - MGM MIRAGE
- Gary Loveman
  - Chairman, CEO and President
  - Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.
- T.J. Matthews
  - Chairman and CEO
  - International Game Technology
- Virginia McDowell
  - President and COO
  - Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc.
- Larry Ruvo
  - Senior Managing Director
  - Southern Wine & Spirits of Nevada
Since its inception, more than $22 million has been committed to the National Center for Responsible Gaming through generous support from various financial donors, including gaming companies, suppliers and vendors, NCRG board members, gaming employees, related organizations and individuals. These contributions allow the NCRG to further its mission to support research, encourage the practical application of new research findings to improve prevention and treatment strategies, and advance public education about responsible gaming.

The following is a list of contributors who supported the NCRG in 2008.

$400,000
Harrah's Entertainment, Inc.*

$286,000
MGM MIRAGE*

$200,000
International Game Technology*

$100,000
Ameristar Casinos, Inc.*
Boyd Gaming Corporation*
JCM Global*
Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc.*

$86,000
Global Gaming Expo*

$50,000
Penn National Gaming, Inc.*
Station Casinos, Inc.*
WMS Industries Inc.*

$25,000
Wynn Resorts, Limited*
Bally Technologies, Inc.*

$5,000
Palms Casino Hotel

$2,000 and under
Glenn Christenson
Harrah’s Cherokee Indian Casino & Hotel

*Indicates the company’s contribution is part of a multiyear pledge.

(For a list of contributors prior to 2008, visit www.ncrg.org.)
RESEARCH REPORT

The NCRG is the leading private source of funding for science-based research and information on gambling and health in the United States. In the 12 years since its inception, the NCRG has supported the highest-quality research projects in the field and has fueled the most dramatic increase in scientific investigations of gambling over the past century. The NCRG remains committed to continuing the expansion of knowledge about the potential health consequences of gambling.

NCRG funds for research are awarded through the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, a program of the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. The Institute, funded by a multimillion dollar contract from the NCRG since 2000, devotes approximately one-third of its budget to a competitive extramural grants program open to institutions worldwide. NCRG support for the Institute also funds the research conducted by the Harvard Medical School faculty at the Division on Addictions.
Ensuring the Integrity of NCRG-Funded Research

Since its founding in 1996, the NCRG has mandated stringent firewalls in a multistep process to separate the gaming industry's contributions from the research it funds. This process, detailed in the diagram to the right, ensures the NCRG and its funders have no influence over which research projects receive funding, nor over the findings of the research that is funded. In this way, the NCRG serves as a model for other industries and institutions interested in learning how to safeguard the integrity of the research they fund.

Gaming Industry
The NCRG's funders – mostly gaming companies and suppliers – make contributions to the NCRG.

National Center for Responsible Gaming
The NCRG keeps a portion of the funds to use for education and outreach initiatives, while the bulk of the funds are distributed to the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, a program of the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. The Institute is charged with all of the grant-making responsibilities for the NCRG. Once the funds are turned over to the Institute, the NCRG has no further role in the grant-making process.

Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders

Intramural Research
Some of the funding stays at the Institute to support its in-house research program.

Extramural Research
The remaining funds are distributed to other institutions and researchers through a competitive grant-making process.

Peer-Reviewed Scientific Journals
After a grant has been awarded and the research has been completed, the researcher usually submits a report on the project and its findings to an independent, peer-reviewed journal. NCRG-funded studies have resulted in the publication of more than 150 articles in such journals. The NCRG and its funders learn about the research findings after they have been published.

Peer Review by Program Advisory Board
Researchers interested in obtaining funding submit project proposals to the Institute’s Program Advisory Board, an independent committee of some of the field’s leading experts. The Program Advisory Board evaluates the proposals based on criteria modeled after those used by the National Institutes of Health.
2008 Publications of NCRG-Funded Research

Publishing research findings in a peer-reviewed scientific journal is how researchers share their work with their colleagues and the public, and subject their methodology and analysis to the judgment of the scientific community. NCRG- and Institute-supported research has consistently been published in the highest-impact journals with the most rigorous standards. Studies published in 2008 showed how the changing landscape of disordered gambling research has evolved into new areas and, in some cases, overturned conventional wisdom about gambling disorders.

Landmark Study of Gambling Disorders in National Mental Health Survey

The landmark National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R), a household survey of 9,282 English-speaking respondents, age 18 and older, is an expanded replication of the 1990 National Comorbidity Survey, which was the first survey to estimate the prevalence of mental disorders in a nationally representative sample. The NCRG and the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders supported the first analysis of the gambling data gathered in the NCS-R through a grant to Harvard Medical School. As reported in 2008 in Psychological Medicine, Dr. Ron Kessler of Harvard Medical School and colleagues determined that the lifetime prevalence of pathological gambling within the sample was 0.6 percent. Almost all participants who had lifetime pathological gambling also had another lifetime disorder (96.3 percent), and 64.3 percent suffered from three or more disorders. Mood disorders, anxiety disorders and substance use disorders were significantly elevated among participants with lifetime pathological gambling, and other disorders were more likely to precede the pathological gambling than to occur afterward or begin at the same time. In fact, 74.3 percent of participants with pathological gambling and another disorder experienced the other psychiatric problem before the onset of pathological gambling (Kessler et al., 2008).

New Understanding of the Course of Gambling Disorders

Since pathological gambling was first classified as a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980, it has been characterized as a chronic and persistent disorder, implying that affected individuals face a lifetime struggle with gambling problems that get progressively worse over time. A growing body of research has called this model into question. A study led by Dr. Debi LaPlante of Harvard Medical School reviewed five recent prospective studies of gambling behavior for evidence related to the stability and progression of disordered gambling symptoms. Published in the Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, the study found that, contrary to conventional and professional wisdom suggesting that gambling problems are always progressive and enduring, gambling disorders seem to follow varied courses and can fluctuate within the full spectrum from the most severe form of the disorder to recovery (LaPlante et al., 2008). The findings of this investigation could have important implications for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of gambling disorders.

Gambling Behavior in Other Cultures

The expansion of legalized gambling in Asian countries has raised concerns about the health risks of both gamblers and gaming employees. Dr. Tae Kyung Lee of Seoul National Hospital in South Korea...
led two studies published in 2008 that explored gambling problems in South Korea. The first examined the health risks and attitudes of 388 casino employees. The investigators found that 3 percent of the employees had a severe gambling problem, a rate similar to the general adult population, and that this group experienced more alcohol-related problems, tobacco use and depression than their counterparts without gambling problems. The employees who reported gambling problems were more reluctant to acknowledge pathological gambling as a health problem and tended to be negative about addressing disordered gambling through the health care system. The authors concluded that, because of this attitude, education programs should focus on improving employees’ understanding of disordered gambling as a mental health disorder (Lee et al., Occupational Medicine, 2008).

Dr. Lee’s second study focused on the demographic and clinical characteristics of Korean casino gamblers with pathological gambling. The study found that the clinical characteristics of pathological gambling lend support to the concept that addiction is a syndrome with multiple expressions. The authors concluded that Korean level 3 gambling is not a one-dimensional disorder, but instead rests on several foundations. As long as clinicians and researcher fail to identify the full set of dimensions underlying the disorder, they argued, difficulties with classification will continue to create diagnostic problems and compromise the accuracy of population-prevalence estimates (Lee et al., International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 2008).

Gambling Behavior Among Racial Minorities
The research base on gambling among minority populations in the United States is limited and, therefore, Dr. Silvia Martins of Johns Hopkins University has made an important contribution in her study of gambling among 452 urban African-American adolescents, a population under study for 10 years. The study found some similarities between male and female gamblers. For example, both male and female gamblers were rated as impulsive and hyperactive by their parents. Female gamblers, however, were more likely than male gamblers to report high levels of anxious and depressive feelings, and males preferred strategic games and gambled more frequently (Martins et al., 2008).

Informed Choice and Responsible Gaming
In 2004, Drs. Alex Blaszczynski, Robert Ladouceur and Howard Shaffer published their paper on the Reno Model, a public health framework for gambling disorders asserting that responsible gambling programs rest upon two fundamental principles: (1) the ultimate deci-
sion to gamble resides with the individual and represents a choice, and (2) to properly make this decision, individuals must have the opportunity to be informed (Blaszczynski et al., 2004). The authors of the Reno Model paper worked with Dr. Lia Nower to develop this concept in depth in the 2008 publication, “Informed choice and gambling: Principles for consumer protection,” in the Journal of Gambling Business and Economics.

Noting that problem gambling can result, in part, from erroneous perceptions about the probability of winning, the co-authors argued that while individuals retain the ultimate responsibility over gambling choices and levels of participation, optimal decision-making depends on, among other factors, the availability of reliable, comprehensive information about the games played. This paper reviews key decision-making models and suggests four primary goals that will lead to optimal choices in gambling: the provision of relevant and objective information; explanation of the benefits of gambling responsibly, as well as the social and personal costs of excessive gambling; additional materials targeted to specific gambling subgroups; and the use of a variety of communication mediums to disseminate materials.

Testing a Prevention Curriculum for Youth

A school curriculum designed to prevent youth gambling by enhancing life skills, mathematical reasoning and critical thinking was tested by lead investigator Dr. Nigel Turner of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto. The results of a controlled experiment evaluating the students’ learning from the program were reported in the Journal of Gambling Studies in 2008. The researchers found significant improvement in the students’ knowledge of random events, knowledge of problem gambling awareness and self-monitoring, and knowledge of coping skills (Turner et al., 2008). These findings suggest such school-based prevention programs might have promise for preventing or reducing gambling among young people.

New Gambling Technology

The emergence of new gambling technologies, such as Internet gaming, electronic gaming machines and video lottery terminals, has raised concerns about their safety. A study led by Allyson Peller of the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance reviewed existing empirical research about gambling and technology to evaluate whether technological interventions can reduce the risks for gambling-related problems among users of these new forms of gaming. After reviewing 47 studies, Peller and her co-authors determined that attempts to develop and implement safety features for new gambling technology show promise, but are methodologically rudimentary and limited in scope (Peller et al., 2008). In addition, findings suggested that improved study methods and collaboration among policymakers, manufacturers and researchers can increase understanding of how new gambling technology affects the public health and stimulate new strategies for implementing effective public health interventions (Peller et al., 2008).
Continuing Impact of NCRG Funding

Support for research often has continuing impact beyond the life of a particular grant. For example, in 1998, a $54,000 grant from the NCRG to the University of Minnesota provided the seed money for a pilot study of the drug naltrexone for use in treating pathological gambling. This pilot study allowed the investigators to secure a significant federal grant for a larger clinical trial of naltrexone. In 2008, Dr. Jon Grant and his co-investigators at the University of Minnesota published the results of that larger study, which found that individuals who received naltrexone demonstrated statistically significant reductions in gambling urges and pathological gaming behavior. The study also found that a lower dose of naltrexone appeared to be just as effective as higher doses (Grant et al., 2008).

Your First Step to Change

The NCRG and Institute have continued to support the proliferation of Your First Step to Change. This brief self-help toolkit was originally developed in 2002 by Harvard Medical School faculty at the Division on Addictions and the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling with support from the NCRG and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

In May 2008, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling released the Chinese (Mandarin), Khmer and Vietnamese translations of Your First Step to Change at the Massachusetts Conference on Gambling Problems. The translation process involved research and discussion of the cultural meaning of gambling and gambling problems for these populations. The Massachusetts Council was able to create the translated versions thanks to a 2007 extramural grant of $91,000 from the NCRG and awarded by the Institute. The guides are being distributed to callers to the Massachusetts Council’s helpline who speak these languages, and at community outreach events and health fairs. The council has already distributed 5,400 copies to 23 health agencies and community centers serving Asian populations in Massachusetts.

The original English edition of Your First Step to Change continues to have impact nationwide. The latest state to reprint the guide for its residents is Pennsylvania at the direction of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board. The online version, available for free at www.basisonline.org, remains one of the most visited sections of the BASIS Web site.
NCRG Task Force on College Gambling Policies

A 2005 study led by Dr. Howard Shaffer of Harvard Medical School found that although more than 40 percent of college students had gambled within the past year, only 22 percent of U.S. colleges and universities had a gambling policy. The NCRG responded to the need indicated in this study by establishing the NCRG Task Force on College Gambling Policies in 2008. Coordinated by the Institute and the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, the task force will create a template of science-based college gambling policies that will help prevent excessive gambling by students and promote recovery from gambling addiction and related disorders.

Members of the task force are administrative and academic professionals representing universities and colleges from all U.S. geographic regions and both private and public schools. They represent student life, student health services, student counseling, athletics and academic departments focused on counseling and gambling research. The following schools, each of which already has a policy on gambling, are represented on the task force:

- University of Alabama
- Bridgewater State College
- University of Denver
- George Fox University
- Harvard University
- Lehigh University
- Mississippi State University
- University of Missouri, Columbia
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Oregon State University
- Villanova University

The task force met twice in 2008, and will release its first round of recommendations in 2009. The initial focus will be on three areas: core prohibitions/restrictions policies, recovery-oriented policies that recognize gambling disorders as a mental health issue, and policies on special events that involve gambling (e.g., casino nights).
References


Program Advisory Board of the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders

Since its inception in 2001, the Institute’s Program Advisory Board has played a vital role by ensuring the most rigorous standards for the conduct of intramural and extramural research. The Board performs a peer-review quality assurance function to evaluate whether the Institute’s research standards have been met, using the methods of the National Institutes of Health as a reference standard. The following individuals served on the board in 2008:

**Linda B. Cottler, Ph.D., M.P.H.**
Professor of Epidemiology in Psychiatry
Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Mo.

**Joseph T. Coyle, M.D.**
Eben S. Draper Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience
Harvard Medical School

**Jeff Derevensky, Ph.D.**
Professor of Applied/Child Psychology
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Youth Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic
McGill University

**William Eadington, Ph.D.**
Professor of Economics
Director, Institute for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming
University of Nevada, Reno

**Richard I. Evans, Ph.D.**
Distinguished University Professor of Psychology
University of Houston

**Eileen Luna Firebaugh, J.D., M.P.A.**
Associate Professor of American Indian Studies
University of Arizona

**Barry Kosofsky, M.D., Ph.D.**
Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Professor of Pediatrics
Chief, Division of Pediatric Neurology
New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center

**Robert Ladouceur, Ph.D.**
Professor of Psychology
Université Laval

Adjunct Associate Professor of Economics
Boston College

**Brian McKay, J.D.**
Former Attorney General of Nevada

**Lisa M. Najavits, Ph.D.**
Professor of Psychiatry
Boston University School of Medicine

**Peter E. Nathan, Ph.D.**
Professor Emeritus of Community and Behavioral Health
University of Iowa

**Eric Turner**
Consultant
Former Executive Director
Massachusetts State Lottery Commission

**Charles Wellford, Ph.D.**
Professor and Chair
Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice
University of Maryland

**Ken C. Winters, Ph.D.**
Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research
University of Minnesota

**Harold Wynne, Ph.D.**
President
Wynne Resources, Ltd.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**
Howard J. Shaffer, Ph.D., C.A.S.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**
Christine Reilly
COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES

In 2008, the NCRG introduced and continued a number of significant initiatives in line with its commitment to increase public awareness and education about disordered gambling and responsible gaming among a variety of audiences.
NCRG Road Tour

Following a successful road tour in 2007, the NCRG took to the road again in July 2008 to promote responsible gaming, share new resources and discuss the latest research in the field of disordered gambling. This year, Chicago, Ill., and Des Moines, Iowa, were the sites for a variety of activities designed to bring the work of the NCRG to the attention of gaming industry representatives, regulators, treatment providers, civic leaders and the media. Participants in the two-city tour included NCRG Chairman Phil Satre and Christine Reilly, executive director of the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders. Satre and Reilly were joined in Chicago by Dr. Ken Winters, an expert on youth gambling from the University of Minnesota, and in Des Moines by Dr. Donald W. Black, an expert in genetics and family history of pathological gambling from the University of Iowa.

Participants in the 2008 NCRG Road Tour briefed a variety of audiences on the latest research in the field of disordered gambling, advancements in treatment and responsible gaming tools, and the NCRG’s newest public education initiatives. Outreach activities also included a number of radio and newspaper interviews. While in Chicago and Des Moines, the NCRG unveiled its new brochure, “Talking with Children about Gambling,” as well as Gambling and the Public Health, Part 1, the third volume in NCRG’s research monograph series, Increasing the Odds, A Series Dedicated to Understanding Disordered Gambling.

Talking with Children about Gambling

With research showing young people are at a higher risk for developing gambling disorders than adults, the NCRG’s commitment to addressing youth gambling has continued to guide the organization’s public awareness efforts. The NCRG in 2008 published “Talking with Children about Gambling,” a research-based guide designed to help parents and mentors discuss this subject with children, deter children from gambling, and recognize possible warning signs of problem gambling and other risky behaviors. The content for the brochure was developed by the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders and guided by Dr. Howard Shaffer of Harvard Medical School.
In addition to the printed brochure, the NCRG developed companion content for its Web site, including downloadable copies of the brochure in both English and Spanish, a frequently asked questions section and a list of online resources on gambling and adolescent mental health. The brochure was introduced during the NCRG’s July 2008 Road Tour in Chicago and Des Moines, and was a central component of the gaming industry’s outreach efforts during Responsible Gaming Education Week (Aug. 4-8, 2008). The NCRG is making a concerted effort to ensure as many people as possible can access this information and is reaching out to youth-related organizations to make them aware of this important resource.

**Partnership for Excellence in Education and Responsible Gaming (PEER)**

In 2008, the NCRG launched the Partnership for Excellence in Education and Responsible Gaming (PEER) program, a dynamic, one-of-a-kind program created to provide gaming entities with the tools and resources needed to develop comprehensive, world-class responsible gaming programs. Based on the American Gaming Association’s Code of Conduct for Responsible Gaming, the PEER program offers members full access to the blueprint needed to implement the Code, as well as collateral materials, best practices, and in-depth, how-to instructions to put the Code into action. PEER members also have access to unique employee training opportunities, on-call implementation assistance, and an annual report card to demonstrate progress on their initiatives. The NCRG featured the PEER program at its annual conference during one of its NCRG at G2E sessions.

**Annual Conference**

**The Changing Landscape of Treatment, Responsible Gaming and Public Policy**

The 9th annual NCRG Conference on Gambling and Addiction, themed “The Changing Landscape of Treatment, Responsible Gaming and Public Policy,” gave gaming industry professionals, health care providers, researchers, regulators and public officials an opportunity to explore new developments in the study of gambling disorders and responsible gaming. The event — jointly sponsored by the NCRG and the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, a program of the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance — was held Nov. 16-18, 2008, at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino and the Las Vegas Convention Center. The conference attracted more than 360 attendees from around the world, including 18 countries outside of the United States.

During the conference’s opening plenary session, “Debating DSM-V: Will New Research Change the Diagnosis of Pathological Gambling?” expert panelists discussed how new research might lead to a revised definition of the disorder by the American Psychiatric Association.

Attendees also explored the costs and benefits of gambling from a cultural, historical and economic perspective, and the challenges involved in creating effective public policies related to disordered gambling and responsible gaming in other sessions. During the panel session, “Working Together: Responsible Gaming in Indian Country,” participants learned about new tools for implementing responsible gaming programs at tribal casinos, including the NCRG’s Partnership for Excellence in Education and Responsible Gaming (PEER) program.
Other conference sessions covered a variety of additional topics, including the health risks of video games, the betting patterns of online gamblers, and culturally relevant responsible gaming programs for Asians and Asian-Americans. In addition, the NCRG Conference once again partnered with Global Gaming Expo (G2E), the gaming entertainment industry’s largest international trade show and conference event, to provide “NCRG at G2E” sessions as part of G2E’s corporate social responsibility track. These joint sessions, held on the final day of the NCRG Conference and open to attendees of both events, continued to attract a significant number of attendees from a wide variety of stakeholder groups.

For those who were unable to attend the conference, the NCRG put technology to work so individuals could still take advantage of the important news and information that came out of this year’s sessions and activities. The NCRG conference blog summarized key conference sessions and special events, incorporated audio interviews with industry leaders and expert researchers, and provided helpful links to visitors. The blog has attracted more than 3,400 visitors since it was launched in 2006. It can be accessed at http://ncrgconference.blogspot.com or through the NCRG Web site.

The 2008 NCRG Conference was generously supported by the following sponsors: MGM MIRAGE (host sponsor); Ameristar Casinos, Inc.; Aristocrat Technologies, Inc.; the Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers (AGEM); Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.; International Game Technology (IGT); Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc.; iView Systems; Konami Gaming; Penn National Gaming, Inc.; Potowatomi Bingo Casino; the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians; Shuffle Master, Inc.; and WMS Gaming Inc.

Scientific Achievement and Poster Awards

One of the highlights of the NCRG’s annual conference is the presentation of the NCRG Scientific Achievement Award. The 2008 NCRG Scientific Achievement Award in the senior investigator category, which honors a researcher whose body of work has advanced the field of gambling-related research, was presented to Dr. Marc Potenza, associate professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine. Potenza was recognized for his significant contributions to the study of gambling disorders in the areas of population studies, genetics, treatment outcome research and neuroscience. Selected by an independent awards committee, he is the first honoree to receive the NCRG Scientific Achievement Award in both the senior investigator and young investigator categories. The award was presented at a special evening reception sponsored by IGT.
The 2008 conference also featured a poster session showcasing new gambling research. This year, 13 of the 19 poster submissions were from countries outside of the United States. The 2008 Outstanding Poster Award was presented to a team of investigators from Jamaica for their study, “Jamaica Child and Adolescent Gambling Survey 2007.” Team members included Deborah Bourne from Hope Enterprises Ltd., and Sonita Morin-Abrahams, Richard Henry, Fay Williams and Winston De La Haye from RISE Life Management Services.

**NCRG at G2E Asia**

In 2008, the NCRG made its first foray into international responsible gaming programming when it participated in Global Gaming Expo Asia (G2E Asia) in Macau, June 3-5. G2E Asia 2008 was held at Venetian Macao’s Cotai Strip Convention and Exhibition Center. The NCRG sponsored two sessions that examined responsible gaming programs within scientific and culturally specific frameworks as part of G2E Asia’s corporate social responsibility conference track.

The first session, “Proactive Progress: A Science-Based Framework for Responsible Gaming,” reviewed the history of disordered gambling research and how that research has been used to develop responsible gaming tools now available to the gaming industry around the world. The second session, “Lost in Translation: Responsible Gaming Programs in Asia,” examined the responsible gaming programs currently used by Western casino operations and whether the same types of programs would be effective in Asia given cultural differences.

The NCRG also sponsored a session called “Understanding the Need for Responsible Gaming” as part of G2E Asia’s new Gaming Management Certificate program, developed in partnership with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Singapore campus and the University of Macau. The one-day certificate program is a professional development course specifically designed to help gaming supervisors and managers upgrade their management skills to position themselves for future career advancement.

**Participation at Conferences and Events**

In 2008, the NCRG also participated in a variety of conferences and events sponsored by other organizations, providing an additional way to share research advances in the field of disordered gambling and new responsible gaming tools with a broader audience. This year, the NCRG had a presence at 12 different conferences and events, with activities ranging from distributing literature and sponsoring a booth, to having NCRG and Institute spokespeople serve as panelists or moderators.

The NCRG had a presence at the following events in 2008: Canadian Gaming Expo (Montreal); Discovery 2008 Conference, Responsible Gaming Council (Ottowa); Global Gaming Expo 2008; G2E Asia 2008 (Macau, China); Massachusetts Conference on Problem Gambling; 2008 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse; National Conference on Problem Gambling, National Council on Problem Gambling; National Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention; Annual Nevada State Conference on Problem Gambling; North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries Annual Conference; North American Gaming Regulators Association Annual Conference; and the 13th Annual Western Indian Gaming Conference, California Nations Indian Gaming Association.
Employee Communications Packages

The NCRG implemented an online employee communications program in 2008 to help the gaming industry educate its employees about responsible gaming. The program was designed to supplement gaming facilities’ existing responsible gaming efforts and help maintain a year-round emphasis on responsible gaming. The NCRG developed three themed employee communications packages in 2008 that incorporated a variety of communications tools and materials that could be customized by gaming facilities to best serve their needs. The employee communications packages developed in 2008 — themed “Keeping it Fun,” “Talking with Children about Gambling,” and “Understanding the Odds” — included items such as responsible gaming articles and sidebars for use in employee newsletters, employee quizzes, manager talking points for use at staff meetings and other helpful educational resources. The employee communications packages are available through a password-protected section of the NCRG Web site.

Research Monograph Series

Two new volumes of the NCRG’s monograph series, Increasing the Odds: A Series Dedicated to Understanding Gambling Disorders, were published in 2008. Gambling and the Public Health, Part 1 featured studies on youth gambling, the effects of gambling on older adults and whether exposure to gambling leads to gambling problems. Gambling and the Public Health, Part 2 examined the prevalence of other mental disorders among pathological gamblers, the effectiveness of self-exclusion programs, the effects of new gambling technology on player behavior, and a framework for creating responsible gaming programs and public policies. The NCRG launched the monograph series in May 2007 to translate peer-reviewed scientific research on gambling into easy-to-understand summaries. The entire series can be accessed on the NCRG’s Web site.
Responsible Gaming Education Week

This year’s Responsible Gaming Education Week (RGEW), held Aug. 4-8, provided the NCRG the perfect vehicle to officially launch its youth initiative, “Talking with Children about Gambling.” Sponsored annually by the NCRG and the American Gaming Association (AGA), RGEW spotlights gaming industry responsible gaming activities nationwide. The theme of the 2008 event was “Let’s Talk About Responsible Gaming.” The NCRG officially launched “Talking with Children about Gambling” with a new employee communications package for AGA members, which included a variety of tools to raise awareness of the issue among employees. Printed copies of the brochure also were made available to employees, who were encouraged to educate themselves, their families and their friends on how to start a conversation with children about the risks of gambling.

Additional Educational Resources

Responsible Gaming Quarterly (RGQ) was introduced to the gaming community in 2001. Since then, it has become one of the leading international resources for news and analysis of disordered gambling issues, with nearly 1,300 subscribers, including industry representatives, treatment providers, academics, regulators, members of the media and government officials. A joint publication of the NCRG and the AGA, RGQ is a free publication providing coverage of the most recent research results in the field of gambling, regulatory initiatives, studies and developments in the treatment field and model citizen programs. The latest issue of RGQ is available through the NCRG’s Web site.

In 2008, the NCRG also continued to provide financial support for the BASIS (Brief Addiction Science Information Source) and The WAGER (Worldwide Addiction Gambling Education Report), one of several science reviews published by the BASIS. These online resources provide information about gambling and addiction research. Published by the Division on Addictions since 1995, The WAGER provides brief, critical reports on recent gambling research, has a monthly readership of more than 8,000 and reaches more than 40 countries. The BASIS also offers free access to the self-help tool Your First Step to Change. The BASIS (www.basisonline.org) attracts more than 40,000 unique visitors annually. More than 10,000 visitors used the interactive program Your First Step to Change in 2008.
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Several major fundraising programs and events, including the American Gaming Association’s (AGA) Gaming Hall of Fame Charity Dinner and Induction Ceremony, the JCM-AGA Golf Classic tournament, Global Gaming Expo’s annual gift to the NCRG, and the “Keep it Fun” responsible gaming awareness wristband program helped raise more than $328,000 for the NCRG in 2008.
2008 JCM-AGA Golf Classic

2008 marked the 10th anniversary of the JCM-AGA Golf Classic, co-sponsored each year by the American Gaming Association and JCM Global. The 2008 event, held in April at Cascada in Boulder City, Nev., raised a record $100,000 for the NCRG. The tournament attracted 128 golfers, including representatives from industry operators, manufacturers and suppliers. Since its inception in 1999, the tournament has raised a total of $647,000 for the NCRG.

The following companies generously supported the event:

**Sponsors**
- 3M Touch Systems
- Absolute Exhibits
- Aruze Gaming America
- Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers
- Bally Technologies, Inc.
- BNP Media
- Corestaff Services
- Corporate Concepts
- DLA Piper
- Gaming Laboratories International
- Global Gaming Expo (G2E)
- Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.
- Hikam America
- International Game Technology
- Konami Gaming
- Patriot Gaming and Electronics
- Southwest Print Source
- Station Casinos, Inc.
- TransAct Technology
- Waffle Technology

**Donors**
- Casa Blanca Resort
- Hamada of Japan
- Kirvin Doak Communications
- Lee Wayne Corporation
- Silverton Casino
- The Venetian
- Wine Country Gift Baskets

Additional Programs

In accordance with the annual giving campaign Global Gaming Expo (G2E) launched in 2006, a special donation to the NCRG of $86,915 was announced at G2E 2008. The donation is made up of contributions from exhibitors and attendees at this premier gaming trade show.

The AGA’s “Keep it Fun” responsible gaming awareness campaign continues to be popular, and the continued sale of the “Keep it Fun” wristbands provided significant support for the NCRG this year. More than 41,500 bands were sold in 2008, yielding $16,624 for the NCRG. Since it was launched in August 2005 during Responsible Gaming Education Week, the wristband program has raised more than $168,500 for the organization.
2008 Gaming Hall of Fame Charity Dinner and Induction Ceremony

One of the gaming industry’s most anticipated events, the 20th annual Gaming Hall of Fame Charity Dinner and Induction Ceremony was held Sept. 16, 2008, at Red Rock Casino, Resort & Spa. The event, which is organized by the American Gaming Association, raised more than $125,000 in support of the NCRG’s research and education initiatives.

Honored for their achievements in and contributions to the gaming industry, this year’s inductees included Bernard “Bernie” Goldstein, chairman of the board and former CEO of Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc., who opened the first riverboat casino in the United States; boxing promoters Robert “Bob” Arum and Don King; and celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse. More than 300 guests from the gaming community helped to celebrate the 2008 honorees’ induction into the Gaming Hall of Fame.

The following companies and individuals generously supported the event:

**Major Underwriter**
Southern Wine & Spirits of Nevada

**Host Sponsor**
Station Casinos, Inc.

**Platinum Sponsors**
- International Game Technology (IGT)
- Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc.
- Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority
- Las Vegas Sands Corp.
- Shulman Family Foundation and CardPlayer Media
- Top Rank, Inc.

**Gold Sponsors**
- Ameristar Casinos, Inc.
- Boyd Gaming Corporation
- Ernst & Young
- LTeventions
- Wynn Resorts, Limited

**Silver Sponsors**
- Bally Technologies, Inc.
- Bank of America
- Fierce, Isakowitz & Blalock
- Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.
- MGM MIRAGE
- Progressive Gaming International Corp.
- The Rainmaker Group

**Contributors**
- DeSimone Consulting Engineers
- Don King Productions
- Global Gaming Expo (G2E)
- Howard S. Silver, Hogan & Hartson, LLP
- Iowa Gaming Association
- JCM American Corporation
- Penn National Gaming, Inc.
- Manus Cooney, Potomac Counsel, LLC
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Rogich Communications Group
- Shuffle Master, Inc.
- The Duberstein Group
- The Molasky Group of Companies
- WMS Gaming Inc.
For more than a decade, the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) has been a critical source of funding for research into disordered gambling and a clearinghouse for responsible gaming education and awareness resources. In 2009, with economic uncertainty already beginning to affect funding for government and private research grants, the NCRG’s support for new research in the field will become even more vital.

The NCRG remains committed to supporting only the highest quality scientific research into disordered gambling. As the body of knowledge about gambling disorders continues to expand and the field continues to evolve, the NCRG will explore new ways to best support scientific research in the field and make the most efficient use of the organization’s grant resources. An announcement regarding the NCRG’s new efforts on this front will be made during spring 2009.

In 2009, the NCRG also will launch its College Gambling Policy Template, a research-based set of model policies created by the NCRG’s Task Force on College Gambling Policies. The template is intended to fill a tremendous void that currently exists at colleges and universities by providing an easy-to-adapt model for policies regarding gambling on campus.

In the realm of public awareness and education, the NCRG will conduct another road tour this year to educate stakeholders about new gambling research and responsible gaming resources. In addition, the NCRG will continue to promote and recruit members for the PEER program, and produce education packages for gaming companies to use in increasing responsible gaming awareness among their employees.

NCRG will proudly host its 10th annual Conference on Gambling and Addiction Nov. 15-17, 2009 in Las Vegas. As part of its ongoing partnership with Global Gaming Expo, NCRG will once again sponsor sessions at G2E Asia, scheduled for June 2-4 in Macau, and will continue producing NCRG at G2E sessions as part of the corporate social responsibility track of G2E’s flagship event in November.

In addition, the NCRG will continue to participate in ongoing education and awareness initiatives such as the dissemination of “Talking with Children about Gambling,” contributing to Responsible Gaming Education Week, and reaching out to the media, regulators, legislators, industry representatives, and the treatment and research communities with the NCRG’s stable of resources and information.